



HADLEIGH  
GROVE, &c.

VOL. II.



THE HISTORY OF THE

HADFIELD

GRAND

VOL. II

THE HISTORY OF THE





HADLEIGH GROVE;

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF

Sir CHARLES DAVERS,

AND

The FAIR JESSICA.

A

NOVEL.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

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HADFIELD'S GROVE:

OF THE

HISTORY

OF THE CHANGING GARDENS

AND

THE MAIN FISSURE

A

NOVEL

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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**HADLEIGH**  
**GROVE, &c.**

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**LETTER XI.**

*Miss Rumney to Miss Belfield.*

**ASHTON HALL.**

**Y**ESTERDAY, Lucy, the hall was honoured with the presence of the Homespun family, all drest in their best bibs and tuckers,

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**B**

**and**

and to render their equipage more commodious, two old grey horses were joined to the bays by the desire of the young ladies, who protested it was a burning shame for people of their rank to visit with a single pair ! A great deal of company sent cards at the same time ; and before the arrival of our new friends, every window of the saloon was crowded with spectators, impatient to behold this strange equipage and still stranger family. About five the chariot drove up the avenue, and Mr. Ashton and my Ladyship ran out to welcome them to the hall. You see, Sir, said the old lady, I intend being a very good neighbour ; I believe it is not much more than a fortnight since this lady





lady first favoured us with her company, but my girls could not be easy till they returned the visit ; if we had stood for ceremony a month would have been almost too early, but among friends, form is quite out of the question.

I am perfectly of your opinion, Madam, replied my guardian, as he led her to the house ; good neighbourhood is far preferable to ceremony ; Miss Rumney, I dare say has a due sense of the honour done her by these young Ladies.

As soon as the saloon door was opened, Miss Jenny confirmed what her mamma had just been saying, viz. that she was an enemy to form,



and pushing rudely through the company, she made up to Miss Chetwyn, who sat at the upper end of the room chatting with a young lady of our acquaintance, and flinging herself into a chair declared it was the hottest day she had known this summer. Do, Miss, lend me your fan, continued she, addressing herself to Fanny, I broke mine just before we set out, and do you know our Kitty is such a cross creature that she would not lend me one of hers though she has got three. Two or three were immediately offered by the ladies who sat next her, and while she was fanning herself, I took a survey of her dress.

As

As I have never told you, Lucy, what kind of a creature it is, I will endeavour at the same time I am describing her dress, to give you some faint idea of her person.

Miss Homespun, for Jenny is the eldest of the ladies, is of a very pretty height ; her face is oval, and her hair which is of a dark brunette, grows extremely becoming ; her skin though not quite transparent, is such as may give her a title to be ranked among the fair ; and her mouth may with the greatest justice be styled agreeable. If any thing in her face can be said to be amiss, it is a pair of eyes whose fire borders rather more upon rage than vivacity ; but upon the whole

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her person is far from being disagreeable.

If this pretty simpleton had been dressed to advantage, you will say, Lucy, she would have been no despicable figure. I am of your opinion, but the awkward manner in which she embellishes or rather disguises her charms, must render her the ridicule of every beholder. A Saxon blue sack trimmed with a broad blond lace, fastened up with two large bunches of pink and white ribbons, was a garment that would have disfigured the most lovely woman. This, Lucy, was the dress of our pretty neighbour; her hair which was at least six inches high, was ornamented with

with a huge black feather, and fastened up behind with a comb, decorated with the remains of an old green necklace; her ruffles which were catgut of her own working, hung half a yard distant from each other to prevent any of the work being hid; and her tucker which appeared to be made out of an old Dresden handkerchief, was drawn quite up to her chin. Do you think my Dear, it is possible there should exist a more awkward figure? Yes, Lucy, if you have any faith in the veracity of your Elmira, you will think her sister a thousand times more ridiculous.

Miss Kitty is as tall as a may-pole, thin, brown, and freckled;



her hair which is as black as jet was set up as high as her sister's, and a large bunch of flowers : pho ! what am I talking of ? fruit I mean, for positively, Lucy, there were several apples and pears placed on the left side : her sack was crimson taffaty, and trimmed with blue penny ribbon, the variety of forms in which it was twirled and twisted, rendered it the exact resemblance of an old fashioned bed, and to compleat the whole, her feet were adorned with a pair of queen-stitch shoes that looked as if they had been a present from her great, great grand-mother.

They not only took up my attention, but that of all the company ;  
our



our beaux smiled and whispered; the ladies bit their lips and fans to keep them from betraying their mirth; and some few of them were obliged to leave the room. Monsieur Gavot happening to drop in when we had drank tea, I asked him gaily if he would accompany us to partake of a syllabub? he perfectly understood me and laughed heartily at the recollection of the farm-house scene. What have you two got between you? cried Miss Chetwyn, smiling, I have no notion of those side glances.

We were talking of a walk, Madam, but Miss Rumney has put me into a cold sweat by mentioning a cow-house; she certainly has some

evil design against me, for the last time I eat syllabub, she is sensible I was near being choaked with the curds.

I'll be whipt now if that is fair, retorted Miss Kitty, immediately taking the hint, I am sure it was not done with an intention to choak you; but that is all one gets by one's good will.

What Enigma have you got among you? asked one of the gentlemen; us poor souls at this end of the room are entirely in the dark.

Why you must know, Sir, when Miss Rumney came to see us, we took

took a walk to the farm-house on the right hand of the parsonage, and that gentleman there, coming in when we had almost eat up the syllabub, I ——— here poor Miss Kitty was interrupted by the arrival of some more company, and the conversation taking a different turn, she was obliged to reserve the conclusion of her story till a more convenient opportunity: just before Mrs. Homespun arose to take her leave, I enquired after the young 'squire.

We are afraid, Miss, that Tony is going mad, ever since you came to see us, he has been poring over musty books, and one of the footmen that came up last week, tells

me he shuts himself up in his closet whole days together, and wont see any body but his tutor. I have wrote to persnade him out of these whimsies, but instead of taking my advice, he sent me a letter filled with reproaches, for depriving him so long of the advantages of education, and told me he was going to convert the best parlour into a library. What he means by library I cannot tell, but William tells me the house looks like a bookseller's shop, and says there are two great round things stand under the windows that have got reading on them, and are painted all over in colours.

I imagine,



I imagine, Madam, said Mr. Ashton, smiling at her ignorance, the young gentleman is going to study the use of the globes; such a thirst after knowledge, in one that has so long been kept in ignorance of the sciences, is something rather extraordinary, but if this is the 'squire's turn, there is the greatest probability that he will one day prove himself an honour to his family.

I don't know, not I, but I think he might be very well satisfied with being as wise as his father; Latin, French, and a pack of other languages, serves only to turn peoples brains; his sisters have never learnt any thing but their mother tongue, and I think that is quite sufficient  
for

for them that do not intend marrying a school-master.

As my guardian was too well bred to hold a dispute with a female, the old lady proceeded to her carriage, without any opposition to her sentiments, and her daughters following her example, we were left at liberty to give our several opinions on the subject which my inquiries after the young 'squire had brought upon the carpet.

It is amazing to me, said Mr. Ashton, as soon as they were gone, that parents who have large fortunes to bestow on their children, should have so little regard to their happiness as to keep them in ignorance of every

every virtue that might render them beneficial to mankind : an illiterate and uncultivated mind is insensible to all the tender feelings of humanity ; without some little knowledge of literature, it is impossible a man should be capable of friendship or good neighbourhood ; he is neither possessed of judgment enough to govern, nor humility enough to obey, I always look upon pride and ignorance as inseparable companions. A man who has never read, is unacquainted with himself, he regards nothing in its true light, but looks upon every thing as subservient to his pleasure : without consulting the laws of equity or justice, he follows the dictates of his own inclinations, and as he is possessed  
of

of the gifts of fortune, thinks the whole world created for his service. To fulfil our duty towards mankind, requires a thorough knowledge of ourselves, but a person deprived of the advantages of learning, is incapable of self-examination ; he knows no ties but those of nature, and his passions are his only monitor.

A state of ignorance then, replied a young lady in the company, may with a great deal of justice be stiled a state of innocence, nay, even of happiness, for a person who knows not the difference between good and evil, though he errs in some essential points, cannot strictly be deemed culpable ;



culpable ; a crime committed through ignorance, should by no means be ranked among those that are committed in open defiance of honour and virtue. Our first parents erred in opposition to the commands of their creator ; they were conscious that there was but one error into which they were in danger of falling, but though forewarned of the punishment that would ensue, gave way to the first insinuations of the tempter. A man whose understanding has never been enlightened, is under none of these restrictions ; he sins not in opposition to the laws, he knows none ; nor can his errors, with justice, be stiled intentional ; he is to be envied, at the same

same time that he is deserving of our pity.

I agree with you there, Madam, but do not you look upon it that the parents of such a person are to the highest degree culpable?

Certainly, Sir, and according to my sentiments, answerable for all their transgressions; it is without doubt the duty of every parent, not only to provide for their children, but to cultivate and improve their understanding, and if they neglect their morals, the errors committed through their carelessness and inattention must certainly, in a great measure, fall upon themselves. Some it is true, either by ill health or  
want

want of knowledge themselves, are quite unequal to the task, but as the world affords a sufficient number of people who are capable to discharge the trust, there is no excuse forcible enough to atone for their neglect. The good lady who has just left us, is, I am afraid, one of those mothers who may be ranked among the number of the negligent.

From what I have learnt of her son, Madam, he begins to be sensible of the injuries done him by his parents, and to make up for the time which has been lost, is going to employ all his attention in the study of the sciences. You have seen the young man, Miss Rumney, addressing himself to me, is he possessed

essed of judgment enough to profit by instruction?

From what I have seen of him, Sir, he appears to have good natural sense, but at present he is as uncultivated as a Chinese or a Hottentot.

The particulars of our late visit then, Lucy, followed of course, but as you are already acquainted with them, a repetition will be quite needless. To my unspeakable uneasiness, Lady Oswald has wrote to intreat Miss Chetwyn to shorten her visit at the hall, and in compliance with the request of her benefactress, the dear girl leaves us the week after next; I am to return with her to the grove, but am to stay with



with her ladyship no more than three days. Mrs. Ashton's Abigail! what on earth brings her here? a summons to attend my guardian; all in good time, I shall attend him when I have finished my epistle. Mrs. Ashton herself, with a face as long as my arm; no resisting such a powerful mandate; lay down thou obstinate pen,

'Tis Guardy calls, I must away.

*In Continuation.*

What, Lucy, do you imagine was the result of this private conference? It was not to acquaint me with the death of my lover, but of his immediate arrival: last night he  
landed

landed at Dover, and to-morrow comes to crave the blessing of his uncle, and without doubt to claim the still more inestimable blessing of his Elmira's hand. Now, Colonel, what will become of you ! but my hand is cramped with writing.

Adieu ! Adieu !

E. RUMNEY.

LET-

## LETTER XII.

*The Same to the Same.*

**P**OOOR Montfort! what a dolorous situation is yours? return immediately and improve your power, or give me back the moiety of my heart, that I may hasten to bestow it on the redoubtable Sir Charles. As I live, Lucy, I am half inclined to retract the civil hints I have given in favour of this same red-coat. The Baronet is quite another creature to what I imagined him, and had I seen him sooner, am ready to think I should have thought it no great hardship

hardship to accept him for my lord and master. When the good soul arrived, we were all seated in the working parlour; Mrs. Ashton was busying herself in sorting shells for a grotto, Miss Chetwyn shading a rose in a fine screen, and my Ladyship sitting in the bow-window, amusing herself in drawing with crayons. When the post-chaise stopt, down went all the shells, Mrs. Ashton flew into the court, Fanny ran to the window, and your poor Elmira sat stupid as a post, not daring to turn her head to the right, nor to the left, least she should see a youth more lovely than her Colonel. By the persuasions of Miss Chetwyn, I at length however assumed a sufficient share of composure



sure to walk as far as the door, and received his formal salutations with a tolerable grace. Though his behaviour was to the highest degree tender and respectful, in a few minutes after we were seated I observed an air of dejection spread over his countenance; there was a visible reserve on all sides, my guardian pestered him to death with questions concerning his travels; I sat forming a thousand reasons for the melancholy that was painted on his features, and wishing it might proceed from some new attachment, while the honest soul appeared equally desirous of reading the true state of Elmira's heart.

After dinner, Fanny proposed a ramble in the park; Sir Charles approved the motion, and telling Mrs. Ashton we would be back to tea, we sallied forth, each of us leaning on our hero's arm.

During our walk, I took an opportunity of mentioning the uneasiness the good folks had been under on account of his repeated delays, and told him, laughing, I imagined some Parisian beauty had deprived us of his company.

A blush immediately discomposed his manly features, but pausing a moment, he replied, indeed, Madam, you are mistaken, my heart has taken up its abode in my native country;

country; a friend, it is true, detained me at Paris much longer than I intended; but had there been no other temptations to court my stay than the charms of the Parisian ladies, I should have arrived in England some months ago.

Aye, aye, so you tell us, but I dare say Sir Charles Davers has not been abroad more than three years without forming some new attachment. Come, come, tapping him on the shoulder, confess, and be forgiven.

Well then, Madam, if I must disclose my sentiments, I here declare in the presence of every visible and invisible being, that if ever I

marry it will be to an English lady.

In vain, Lucy, did I examine his features; they refused to give me any information of what I wished to know: if I am alone with him he observes the most profound silence, stroaks my dog, plays with my squirrel, but addresses not a single compliment to my Ladyship. In company, his behaviour is quite the reverse, never was any one more assiduous, my every look is watched; if I drop my fan he reaches it in a moment; if a window is open behind my chair, the sash is immediately put down for fear I should take cold; in short, no one can behave with more profound respect:  
it



it seems to me that when in company he prefers me to all others, and that when alone there is some absent fair one has the preference to your Elmira. To-morrow this whimsical lover of mine sets out on a journey to Northamptonshire, and before he returns I am to conduct Miss Chetwyn to her generous benefactor. By a letter we received yesterday, I find Lady Oswald has added another amiable woman to her family, but her history is to remain a secret till our arrival at the grove. While I am at Hadleigh, you may depend on a long epistle.

Adieu, my Dear,

Believe me, your's sincerely,

E. RUMNEY.

## LETTER XIII.

*Madam Dumont, to Mademoiselle  
Agness.*

CALAIS.

I have nothing more to do now, Car. than say my prayers backwards, like the vintner in the fuds, and go hang myself; we are betrayed, and ruined to all intents and purposes! soon after I received your last, De Fal left the castle, and wrote to inform his sister, that his intended tour would take him up more than three months; you may judge how greatly I was disappointed by this intelligence; the company had before  
most

most of them retired to their own houses, and I began to think of following their example, when Mademoiselle De Fal, said, she could on no account think of parting with me untill her brother's return. Untill I found she expected some foreigners on a visit, it was with the greatest reluctance I complied with her request, but that consideration over ballanced all my scruples, and, in hopes of making some more noble conquest, I endeavoured to obliterate all thoughts of my late disappointment. About three days ago as I was sitting at my toilette, Nanette, Mademoiselle, De Fal's woman, brought me the following extraordinary letter : read, Car.

and then tell me if I was not in a pretty situation ?

*To the most vile and most artful of  
her Sex.*

Know, thou most worthless of women, that you are discovered. As Madam Dumont, I thought myself happy, nay, even honoured in your acquaintance, but as the vile and abandoned, Daredeville, I must desire you, immediately to quit the castle ; my brother, thank heaven ! has escaped your snares, I think it beneath me to explain myself any further on the subject ; your own conscience will unfold the mystery.

I im-



I immediately began to prepare for my departure, not thinking it would be at all prudent to wait a second mandate, and when the post chaise arrived, that I had sent for to convey me from the castle, I bowed carelessly to Mademoiselle de Fal, who was standing at her dressing-room window, tripped into it, and bid the boy drive to Paris. On my arrival there, I met with a shock far greater than the former, the house was shut up, our maid flown, and the goods had been seized on by one of our creditors. I found it would never do to stay there, and in order to prevent their making a sale of me also, I set out directly for Calais: the first fair wind I intended embarking

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for England, for as our characters were known, it would have been impossible to live any longer at Paris. What on earth, Car. could induce Nelly to betray us? for by her flying, I make no doubt but she was the person who discovered me, to Mademoiselle de Fal. Since I have been here, the Count has been married to a young English lady. So you may get ready the willow garland, as soon as you please. The captain, has sent to inform me, the wind serves. Adieu! my Dear, I shall be with you by the time you receive this,

H. DUMONT.

L E T.

## LETTER XIV.

*Miss Rumney, to Miss Belfield.*

HADLEIGH GROVE.

AFTER the most agreeable journey in the world, I sit down to acquaint my Lucy, with a little adventure that happened to me a few weeks before I left the Hall. As I was skipping from my own apartment to Miss Chetwyn's, with a ban-box full of trumpery, my foot slipped, and down came my ladyship and her burthen, and as I was scrambling up again; among the rest of the things that lay upon the ground, I observed a letter, but not

in the least imagining but it was one of my own, I tossed it into the box among the rest of the lumber, and walked quite unconcerned to the apartment of my friend: an old flower happening to engage her attention, she twitched it out of the ban-box, and to one of the wires, hung the very paper that had presented itself to me in the passage: I now perceived that the superscription was not mine, and upon a nearer view, found it to be the copy of a letter, addressed to Mr. Wentworth, by Sir Charles Davers.

What a humiliating circumstance, Lucy! in this epistle he declared his repugnance to comply with the will of his father, and in terms,



terms bordering on enthusiasm, confessed a passion for the daughter of a gardener. Though this discovery must consequently be productive of happiness to myself, I confess I found myself most terribly humbled. Has a gardener's, low bred offspring, said I to myself, sufficient charms to rival the high born and beautiful Elmira? Fanny, read my thoughts: you are piqued, my Dear, at this plain proof of your lover's inconstancy, but indeed, Mira, it is the most fortunate discovery you possible could have made; I thought my amiable friend had been less of the coquette, than to prize the conquest when she disdained the slave; but I find we are  
all

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all of us more or less infected with our share of vanity.

I was ashamed of myself, Lucy, ashamed to think how ridiculous I appeared in the eyes of that virtuous girl. Confess, now, said she, taking my hand with an air of pity and compassion, that you should have been better pleased, if Sir Charles had given you an opportunity of refusing him.

No, indeed, my Dear, I had not such a wish, the first discovery of a lover's inconstancy, though we cease to love ourselves, must undoubtedly be a shock to our vanity, after a few moments consideration, I am sensible it is the most fortunate  
cir-

circumstance possible to have happened. After chatting a great while on the subject, we began to get ready for our journey, and as it was highly improbable, that Sir Charles, should miss the paper, I put it in my letter-case, and determined to confine the secret to my own bosom.

On our arrival at the grove, Lady Oswald, presented to us the young stranger, whom she had taken under her protection, since the absence of Miss Chetwyn. Never, Lucy, did I behold a greater display of beauty! she is loveliness, in its most lovely form. I know not the reason, but from the first moment of beholding her, I felt emotions

tions which I never before experienced ; her ladyship, need not have commanded us to love her, she has a magic in her charms, that must draw the affections of every one who has the happiness to know her.

Jessica (for that is the name of our new friend) has not been more than a fortnight at the grove ; Miss Holgate, has just been telling me that Lady Oswald, brought her from London, and has promised to entertain me with her history the next time we are alone. I am summoned to the tea-table, adieu, my Dear, I think I have wrote a great deal, considering it is more than three hours since we arrived.

*In*



*In Continuation.*

While the company were admiring a winter piece, just finished by the pencil of Miss Faulkner; the sprightly Clara, and myself, stole into the garden, and stealing ourselves by the side of the canal; I reminded her of her promise. My aunt, my dear Miss Rumney, was a few weeks ago summoned to town by a distant relation, as a witness in a depending lawsuit, and happening to take lodgings in Piccadilly, she had the good fortune to save from ruin the most virtuous of her sex. The first evening of her being in town, the door of her apartment

stand-

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standing rather upon a jar, she beheld a young lady in an opposite room, weeping and wringing her hands in an agony of grief. Compassion, my dear Miss Rumney, is the most striking virtue in the character of Lady Oswald; she was too well bred to intrude on the retirement of a stranger, but sending for the mistress of the house, inquired who it was that lodged on the same floor. I am almost as great a stranger to her as yourself, Madam, she came some time ago in the character of a servant, and took lodgings for her lady, but after having brought several boxes, and ordered fires in the rooms, she, returned to their old apartments, and found that her mistress had left the house, and took

took with her all her cloaths, and the milliner with whom they lodged could give no account to what part of the town she was gone. The poor young woman returned in an agony not to be described, and for some time her tears and sobs, prevented her from unfolding to me her griefs. When I was acquainted with the cause, and found that she was a stranger in England, I begged her to make herself quite easy, assuring her that she should be welcome to continue in my apartments, without paying the price agreed on till I had an opportunity of letting them to greater advantage, and that I would if it was agreeable to herself, recommend her into some genteel family.

as

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as lady's woman. She appeared sensibly touched with my kindness, but told me she was not entirely destitute of money : If you will give me leave, Madam, said, she, to continue in the smallest of these rooms, at a price that you would take of any other person, I shall esteem it a particular favour, and untill I can hear of some place that is likely to suit me, I will endeavour with your recommendations to support myself with my needle.

It is now, Madam, above six weeks since she has been with me, and has all that time employed herself wholly in working point for a milliner, who lives in the next street; this last week I have observed



served an unusual gloom upon her countenance, and have several times caught her in tears, but am at present unacquainted with the cause.

Do you think, said her ladyship, that she would look upon it as an intrusion, if I was to call in upon her as I pass to my own apartment ?

Not in the least, I dare say, Madam, she would on the contrary think herself greatly honoured by such a condescension.

The first time my aunt went out, she tapt at her room door, and with an air of freedom, told her, as they were both alone, it would be charity  
to

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to each other if they spent the evening together. The dear girl curtesyed, and replied without any confusion, that she was entirely at her ladyship's service, at the same time expressing a due sense of the honour that was conferred on her.

The first interview convinced, Lady Oswald, that she was deserving of every favour friendship could bestow, and without inquiring into her family, she made the fair Jessica an offer of her immediate protection; what more increased her ladyship's esteem, was the repulses the virtuous girl had just made to a young nobleman, that had insulted her by a dishonourable proposal; he had seen her several times at the milliner's

liver's and finding her situation was such as might encourage his attempts, made no scruple of making an open declaration of his sentiments: finding persuasions ineffectual, he even went so far as to threaten force, and that it seems was the occasion of her uneasiness, when my aunt first saw her bewailing her unhappy fate. On their arrival at the grove, her ladyship desired us to look upon her lovely charge, as the most inestimable gift of fortune; from this moment, cried she, I shall rank her among the number of my children: Miss Faulkner, and my Fanny, have by their virtues rendered themselves deserving of that title, and if I have any skill in the human heart, this  
amiable

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amiable stranger may, with equal justice, lay claim to my esteem.

The sweet girl, though sensibly affected with the goodness of her benefactress, was some days before she could be prevailed on to look upon herself as one of her ladyship's family; if we were walking, she would be sure to take the left hand, and in all her behaviour testified so large a share of humility, that it was evident she looked upon herself no higher than a domestic. There is nothing so painful to a generous mind, as to see those whom they have distinguished by their friendship, sinking under a load of obligations, and unable to look up to their benefactor, without the  
most



most visible restraint. My aunt was quite unhappy till she had banished those humble sentiments from the bosom of her Jessy; few, like her, have the art of rendering dependence easy! If you would wish, my Dear, said she one evening to Jessica, that I should believe you sensible of my friendship, throw aside every humble sentiment; the benefits I confer on you, are no more than your virtues may with justice claim; it is the duty of every person, blest with the means of doing good, to make the unhappy their peculiar care. I look upon those who are intrusted with plentiful fortunes, as stewards and instruments of their Creator's favours: happy those, who, when they are called upon, will be

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able to render a faithful account of their stewardship ! So long as my dearest Jessy continues to behave with this distant respect, I shall think she entertains the most unfavourable sentiments of my patronage. I would be loved, my Dear, not revered ; unreserved confidence, and a freedom of manners, is all the homage I wish to receive. Treat me as you would a mother ; the duties of that character it shall be my study to fulfil.

From that time, Miss Rumney, our friend began to assume a greater degree of confidence : she appeared no longer diffident and reserved ; her respect was tempered with the most engaging sweetness, and in her conversation

versation was blended a vivacity that she was before unconscious of possessing. As she had never been instructed in drawing, I have undertaken to learn her; and it is the task of Miss Faulkner to improve her in musick.

7 Could you never yet learn, Miss Holgate, from whom this amiable girl derives her origin?

I was once, my Dear, impertinent enough to ask her that question, and I think she told me her father was gardener to some nobleman in France; but the dear girl appeared so extremely embarrassed and confused, that I immediately dropt the subject. She certainly has not re-

ceived an education answerable to her fine endowments ; but it appears to me quite incredible, that a woman possessed of such uncommon and various attractions, should derive her birth from a plebeian.

Just then our three companions joined us. Do you know, Elmira, cries Miss Chetwyn, that we are this evening to have a concert in the temple, and that a certain gay acquaintance of your's is to have the honour to be of our party ; the poor soul is in doleful dumps, but I have taken the liberty to ease him of his apprehensions concerning the baronet. Come, no blushing, but put on all your airs and graces to receive him.

Will



Will this young lady favour us with her assistance? said I, taking the hand of Jessica.

I cannot play, Miss, replied she, with an engaging sweetness, but I will endeavour to accompany you with my voice.

As we were sauntering to the house, a thought entered my head, which had never before occurred. This certainly, said I to myself, must be the very person that alienated from me the affections of my lover; she too was the daughter of a gardener in France, and it is impossible there should be two so extremely lovely. I communicated my thoughts to Miss Chetwyn; she declared I was

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superstitious : but let us look at the letter, said she ; as far as I can remember, Sir Charles gave a very different description of his charmer.

I took out my pocket-book, and pretending to be looking over a milliner's bill, we compared every feature of the fair Jessica with the portrait in our hands. It certainly is the same ! exclaimed Fanny, before she had perused the five lines ; never did features more faithfully answer a description.

How, my dear Miss Chetwyn, shall we do to be convinced of this affair ? Sir Charles I am sure is ignorant of his fair one's being in England, or he would long before this

this have taken an opportunity of making a visit to the grove.

Let us walk faster and overtake them; I will ask her if she has ever heard of the name of De Fal, and enquire if there is not such a family at Pontamousson.

We did so; and without any surprise or hesitation, the amiable girl replied, that Monsieur De Fal resided at a small distance from her father's. The castle I think is generally crowded with company; was there a great deal last summer, Miss? This, Lucy, was my speech. I believe, Madam, it was never known to be honoured with a more brilliant assembly; there was a great

number of foreigners from almost every part of Europe, and I think some few Englishmen. Did you ever hear the names of any of the latter, Miss? I have an acquaintance that is very intimate in the family. Yes, Madam, one of them I think was called Sir Charles Davers; he came once or twice to my father's with Monsieur De Fal; but I have no knowledge of any of the others.

She pronounced this in a voice so firm, so perfectly composed, that it is impossible she should be acquainted with his passion; not even a single blush discomposed her lovely features. To try her still further, I asked if Sir Charles was not extremely gay among the French ladies? It is very



very likely, Madam, that he might; no women are more renowned for their gallantry: but those few times that I saw him, I thought there appeared to be a peculiar gravity in his disposition. These enquiries tell me, smiling, that he is something more than an acquaintance. You are right in your conjections, my Dear, replied Miss Holgate, laughing, for, if I am not greatly misinformed, Miss Rumney is intended to be Lady Davers.

This intelligence must certainly have wrought a change in her features, if Sir Charles had ever made a discovery of his sentiments: but not the most trifling emotion betrayed itself. She rallied me on my

hard

D 5

flyness

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flyness with a vivacity that was quite enchanting, and, when I endeavoured to make some awkward excuses for my curiosity, told me, in an affair that was so extremely interesting to myself, it was not the least to be wondered at, that I should be inquisitive.

On our return to the house, the first object that presented itself was my despairing swain. To tease him a little, I affected the most cool reserve, and just making a slight return to his civilities, tripped from the place where he stood, and mixed with the company.

The poor Colonel appeared most sensibly mortified; he has a masterly hand

hand upon the violoncello, but was too much out of spirits to aid the concert: mine were quite in allegro; I sung, played, was in short the most condescending creature in the world. Miss Chetwyn asked me to accompany Clara on the guitar, while she obliged the company with the Prudent Fair; to carry the joke still farther, upon recollecting it was a favourite song of the Colonel's, I refused to grant her request. If Miss Holgate will play any other song, I shall accompany her with a great deal of pleasure, but I have the greatest aversion in the world to that. You was once very fond of it, Miss Rumney, says poor Montfort, looking on me with an air of tenderness. I am a strange

whimsical creature, Colonel ; my taste is very much altered within these few days.

This was too much ; he hemmed, looked silly, left his seat, and withdrew to a window. I sat, seemingly, quite unconcerned at his uneasiness, but in my heart felt some few sparks of compassion. Jessica sung ; her voice would have moved an angel ; the whole company were in extacy ; but the poor love-sick Montfort stood motionless as a statue, and appeared quite inattentive to the heavenly sounds. When she had done singing, I arose, and, walking carelessly to the window, gave him a smart slap on the shoulder ; he started from his reverie.



verie. Is it you, Madam? with a face a yard long. Madam! repeated I with emphasis; why not your Elmira? May I be so happy as to believe that title would not have offended Miss Rumney? his features brightened as he spoke. I cannot tell, Colonel; but from what little acquaintance I have with that lady, I believe I could answer for her forgiveness. Have I been mistaken then? is not Sir Charles Davers the happy favourite of Heaven and my Elmira? Sir Charles Davers is designed for greater happiness; are your sentiments of me so very unfavourable, Sir, as to imagine I am of such an inconstant disposition? No; I am still that same Elmira you once thought worthy

thy

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thy of your friendship. Then I am blest indeed ! repeat, my Charmer, repeat once more those pleasing sounds. We shall be remarked, Colonel, the company have already begun to observe us. Be chearful ; fortune already begins to smile approbation on our friendship ; you have nothing to fear from my inconstancy.

With this unintelligible speech I left him, and seating myself by the lovely Jeffy, joined once more in the concert. About eleven the company left the grove ; my swain received an invitation to breakfast with us to-morrow, and, if I am not extremely cautious, will certainly tempt me to a discovery of my secret,

or

or rather the secret of Sir Charles :  
 little does the poor baronet imagine  
 how intimately I am acquainted  
 with his flame ! how I shall enjoy  
 their first interview, Lucy ! But  
 whither am I rambling ? it is almost  
 an hour past midnight, and yawn,  
 yawn, yawn, goes your

**ELMIRA.**

**LET**

## LETTER XV.

*Sir Charles Davers, to Monsieur  
De Fal.*

ASHTON-HALL.

A Whole month's search, and not the most trifling intelligence of our lovely fugitive; my friend I fear has been equally unsuccessful: what measures must we take to discover her! my uncle is every day pressing me to fulfil my engagement with Elmira; I have neither resolution to acquaint him with the cause of my evasions, nor inclination to alter my situation; even though I was ~~sure~~ never more to find Jessica, would



would it not be the greatest injustice in me to marry Miss Rumney? she has a heart susceptible of the most tender sentiments, and all the return I should be capable of making, would be a sang froid that must embitter all her happiness. This morning Mrs. Ashton, with a half gay, half serious air, proposed a masked ball in honour to an approaching joyful ceremony. We shall not now, I imagine, be very long, Sir Charles, before we have the happiness of wishing you joy on your marriage; I have been telling Elmira that we must have a masked ball on the occasion. Miss Rumney blushed, but, if I am not greatly mistaken, very much enjoyed my confusion. You must know,

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know, Frederick, I have never yet mentioned to her a syllable on the subject; what the devil must she think of me? since breakfast my uncle has sent for her to his study; Mrs. Ashton is of the privy-council; it will be my turn next, so, in order to compose my scattered thoughts, I will walk into the garden.

*In Continuation.*

It is an odd request! but she shall be humoured. As I was walking seriously in a close grove behind the house, Elmira, with a face expressive of uncommon pleasure, advanced with hasty steps to meet me. My guardian waits to speak with you, Sir Charles; I have  
been

been closeted this half hour, and as I was not quite perfect in my own lesson, am come to give you some few instructions before you attend the privy-council. Come, you must look upon me as your uncle; I am going to ask you your catechize. In the first place, Sir, do you remember on what conditions your father left you his estate?

I do perfectly, Sir; amazed to think where this would end, but determined to go through my examination with as much gravity as her ladyship. And are you disposed to accept the hand which was destined you by the will of an indulgent father? come, no equivocations, observing I was a little embarrassed,

your

your aunt tells me she has discovered an unusual coldness in your behaviour to Elmira. Do you consider, Sir Charles, what an immense fortune you will receive from this alliance? forty thousand pounds is no inconsiderable sum; and when put in competition with that which you will lose by an alliance with another, is, let me tell you, worthy your most serious consideration. Do not you think I have acted my part well? bursting into a loud laugh before I had time to answer her; these, my Friend, are the questions you must prepare to answer.

I was so extremely amazed at her vivacity, so ashamed of my dissimulation, that I remained entirely speechless.



speechless. Come, lay aside your astonishment; I can forgive inconstancy, when the cause is so truly amiable; but remember, Sir Charles, I shall expect the honour of a refusal. What still silent! for heaven's sake, my Friend, resume your tongue.

There is something, my dear Miss Rumney, so extremely enigmatical in your behaviour, that it at once confounds and astonishes me.

Indeed! what then will you think, when I tell you that I have not yet half surprized you? I am convinced, Sir Charles, that your late tour has rendered you incapable to fulfil your engagements with that honour for which

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which you have always been distinguished; I release you from them, but that I am sensible will be insufficient to compleat your happiness. The gentleman to whom your father bequeathed the greatest part of your estate, in case you refused the lady of his choice, will, without doubt, assert his right, when he finds you have placed your affections on another object; but, to avoid that inconveniency, I must give you an open refusal of my hand; by that means one half of my fortune will be forfeited, but I am not in the least doubtful of the generosity of Sir Charles Davers.

Generous woman! cried I, clasping her to my bosom; a liberty I  
had

had never taken when in the character of her lover. Your behaviour, my dear Miss Rumney, is worthy only of a person whose ideas are as exalted as your own; you have by some unthought of and uncommon means, discovered a secret, which I know it was ungenerous in me to conceal; you pity and forgive my weakness. What return shall I make for this superlative goodness? Be ingenuous, Sir Charles; look upon me as your friend; and tell me if the fair fruiterer is acquainted with your passion? For heaven's sake, my dear Elmira, with what familiar do you converse? With yourself, my Friend, taking out the copy of a letter which I knew to be  
my

my own writing ; I, by accident, found this paper, the morning that you set out for Northamptonshire.

There now needed no farther explanation. Without any abridgment, I gave her an account of every thing that happened to me at Paris, and entreated her assistance in discovering the fair Jessica.

I shall in a few weeks, Sir Charles, be entirely at your service ; but must first insist upon your accompanying me on an excursion to Hadleigh, and that while we are there, your behaviour to me may be such as it would, had you intended me the honour of your hand ; there are  
a beau-



a beautiful group of females now assembled at the grove, but whatever are your sentiments of them, I must insist upon your observing a perfect indifference to every one but myself.

Something rather particular in this scheme, Frederick; but I have however promised to pay an implicit obedience to her will. Next week we are to set out on an expedition, and when we return, I am to hasten our so much talked-of marriage. Hasten it, my Friend, on purpose to have the pleasure of a refusal. An odd fancy, is it not? but it is the will of a female. I am

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going to attend my fair friend in a  
walk.

Adieu!

Believe me your's

most faithfully,

C. DAVERS.

LET-

## L E T T E R X V I.

*Miss Rumney to Miss Belfield.*

ASHTON HALL,

Thursday morning six o'clock.

**T**H E R E is nothing, Lucy, contributes so much to happiness as the thoughts of conferring it on others. Since I have contrived this whimsical method of restoring Sir Charles to the sight of his long lost charmer, I have felt a greater degree of serenity than I ever before experienced. The thoughts of remaining the undisputed property of Colonel Montfort, you will perhaps think in a far

greater measure contributes to my repose ; I will not deny, Lucy, that a few pleasing ideas crowd upon my thoughts, when I make that same animal the subject of my meditations ; but I assure you it is not without the highest satisfaction that I reflect on the pleasure which will inspire the heart of Davers, when he first beholds his lovely Jessy ; beholds her in a situation so much superior to what he could expect.

In my last I gave you the whole account of our whimsical tete-a-tete, we have ever since been quite inseparable. Mr. and Mrs. Ashton are more joyous than it is possible to conceive, but they cannot, with all their sagacity, discover the cause of this



this sudden alteration. I have promised to accompany the good soul in a walk before breakfast; I see him now in the gardens. Adieu, Lucy, in haste I throw aside my pen to attend him.

\* \* \* \* \*

What would I have given, Lucy, that you had been with us this morning! As the love-sick baronet and your Elmira were rambling arm in arm through a large meadow, at the back of this noble mansion, who should they espy but the two lovely Homespuns trampling among the highest of the grass. We stood some minutes amazed, to think what could be their inducement for walk-

ing in the midst of the dew, when I observed one of them stoop, and taking a blade of grass, held it over the mouth of a bottle. I then recollected that it was May, and on a nearer view found they were verifying the account given of them by Mr. Dimock's correspondent. As soon as they saw us, Miss Kitty came running towards us with the greatest speed, but her foot unluckily catching in the grass, she fell at her full length, and, O, dire mischance! broke the precious bottle against a mischievous pebble. Sir Charles, like a true knight errant, flew to her assistance, I followed, but on raising her from the ground, never was so droll a sight exhibited; her gown and apron were dragged up to

to the waist, and her petticoat, which was of fine French quilting, was adorned with a flounce of dirt above a quarter deep; her shoes and stockings were of the same delicate hue, and to compleat the picture, her bonnet and cap had slipped off in the scuffle, and left her ebony tresses hanging in wild disorder on her shoulders.

O gemini! cried the draggled ideot, as soon as she discovered her situation, how unfortunate I have been, Miss Rumney, I have been four mornings in gathering no more than that little bottle full of dew. Just then her sister joined us in the same woeful plight, I am very glad,

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Kitty, that you have spilt it, that comes of your bragging, it was but two or three minutes ago that you gave yourself airs, and said you had got half a bottle full more than me.

As Sir Charles had never before the honour of seeing these uncouth damsels, this whimsical scene afforded him infinite diversion. As soon as they were out of sight, we gave free scope to our mirth, and indeed could hardly restrain it while in their presence. In a few days, Lucy, we are to set out on our intended excursion : do you think it will be possible for the baronet to observe strictly the rules which I have



have laid down for him? meet with whatever temptations he will, all his assiduities are to be confined to my ladyship; on these terms, and these only, I have promised to assist him in the recovery of his lost Jessica. As the dear girl is entirely unacquainted with his passion, I think it is highly improbable that he should, on discovering her, break out into any violent extravagancies. Such an indiscreet procedure would entirely disconcert our measures; to carry it through with an appearance of honour, he must appear perfectly indifferent to all the sex but his Elmira; but when I have given him an absolute refusal, he may, without obstructions,

tions, lay siege to the object of his choice.

How impatient, Lucy, would be the honest soul, if he had the least suspicion of the joyful surprise he is soon to meet with, every tedious minute would be spent in anticipating approaching happiness; I should be pestered to death with his grateful effusions. A formal group of old Grecians, and antiquated Dowagers, coming up the walk; what on earth, Lucy, can bring them here so early in the morning? in full dress too: something more than common is certainly in agitation. I am dying with impatience to be acquainted with the cause of this extraordinary visit; I can write

no

no more ; this same curiosity is too powerful to suffer me to remain any longer closeted.

Ever your's,

E. RUMNEY.

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LETTER XVII.

*The Same to the Same.*

YOU are sensible, my dearest Lucy, that superstition can never be ranked among the number of your Elmira's foibles. What then will you think of me, when I tell you that a dream has affected me in the most uncommon manner? As I was but in my second year when the cruel seas deprived me of a mother, it cannot be supposed that I should be able to form any idea of her person. I have frequently, with streaming eyes, listened to my guardian, while he related the mournful  
tale

tale of their unhappy fate : I say this, my Lucy, because with that amiable parent perished an infant sister. My father, though he escaped a watery grave, survived but to find himself the most wretched of mankind, and it was with the greatest difficulty his friends persuaded him to live for his Elmira : he had vainly imagined that the happiness arising from a union of virtuous hearts, was sufficient to enable him to support, unmoved, the most cruel strokes of adverse fortune. Let fate, would he frequently exclaim in the transports of his exulting heart, deprive me of every earthly blessing but my Sophia, and I shall yet be rich, richer far than the most wealthy monarch. In her was summed



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up all his earthly good, and she, while living, was the only deity he worshiped. The death of a rich relation at Florence, who had bequeathed them a considerable part of his fortune, called this happy pair from their native country. I, the first pledge of their mutual affection, was then not quite two years old, my mama was just recovered from the birth of her second, and as she had ever looked upon it as one of the grand points of female virtue to discharge the sacred duties of a mother, her infant daughter became the companion of her voyage: my father fearing the fatigue would be too much for the delicate constitution of his Sophia, persuaded her in vain to leave the lovely charge in  
 England;

England ; the relation to whose care I was intrusted, joined in the request, but the amiable woman would listen only to the voice of nature.

Who trusts her nursing to another,  
A parent she, but not a mother.

This fatal voyage deprived them both of life : my father, and three more gentlemen, escaped the same unhappy fate by swimming to a neighbouring creek ; but every female passenger, and above thirty men, perished in the wreck.

It was some days before the gentlemen could prevail on their disconsolate friend to pursue his voyage ;  
a total

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a total inactivity had taken possession of his senses ; fortune appeared a consideration beneath his notice ; with his Sophia was buried every hope of happiness.

In vain did they remind him that he had still one precious pledge that required the hand of an assiduous care : he intreated them to leave him. Provide for your own passage my Friends, since I have lost all that rendered life desirable, I will finish the remainder of my wretched days in bewailing my Sophia ; this desolate island is best adapted to a wretch like me ! Reason, and their repeated persuasions, at length however restored him to himself, and the worthy friends who had expressed such  
warm

warm concern for the welfare of my father, I accompanied him to Florence. As Mr. Ashton is one of them, you cannot wonder, my Lucy, that his gratitude ended not with his life : Sir Charles Davers, the brother of Mrs. Ashton, was another, and the third of these worthy men a distant relation of my mama ; the latter died during their residence at Florence, and the two former returned with him to England. Sir Charles and my father lived about five years after this fatal voyage, and at their death bequeathed each of them an infant charge to the care of their surviving friend.

But

But to return to my dream. I have this night, my Dear, beheld the shade of a parent, of whom I have not the slightest remembrance; she presented me a sister, the lovely image of herself, and commanding me to love her, vanished from my eyes in a cloud of transparent æther. The rays of light which surrounded her, shone so resplendent in my chamber that it awoke me from my slumber, and it was some minutes before I could persuade myself but the vision had been real.

Here comes Sir Charles: this, Lucy, is the auspicious morn that he is to attend me to Lady Oswald's; the



the youth appears quite impatient to be going; instinct certainly informs him that he is there to meet his fellow soul. I am just going to equip myself in my travelling garb, my Friend, leave me a few moments, and I shall be ready to attend you.

There, Lucy, I have finished the duties of the toilette, tell me, am I not perfectly irresistible? A white lustrous jesuit, trimmed with blond lace, and a fine chip hat, with pale pink ribbons, is a dress, of all others, most becoming the person of your "Elmira"; I really could not find it in my heart to wear any thing else; but adieu,

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adieu, the phaeton is at the door:  
A good journey to you, cries my  
Lucy. For self and swain I thank  
thee child.

E. RUMNEY.

L. E. T.

## LETTER XVIII.

*Monfieur De Fal to Sir Charles  
Davers.*

TURIN.

**L**ITTLE did I imagine when I  
laft wrote to you, that what I  
am going to acquaint you with  
would be the fubject of my next  
letter. : Jessica, when found, is  
your's my Friend : from this mo-  
ment I resign all title to that match-  
less beauty. : What ! cries my aſto-  
nished Charles, can have occaſioned  
this ſtrange révolution in the bo-  
som

som of De Fal ? has he found out some new charmer, or is the lovely maid less worthy of his passion ? Before I answer these questions, I must inform my friend of an uncommon adventure that has happened to me since I have been at Turin. If you remember, I parted from my valet a few days before you left the castle : the evening preceding that in which we set out on our separate peregrinations, a young fellow, who pretended he came from Paris, offered himself as a candidate for the place ; his appearance was rather effeminate, but there was a nameless something in his countenance that prejudiced me greatly in his favour. In short, without any further consideration I hired him,

him, and he fulfilled the several duties of his post with a diligence that rendered him far more valuable than any servant I had ever yet met with. When I had been rather more than a week in Italy, a Spanish nobleman came with his family to reside a few months at Turin. Accident very soon introduced us to each other; and after a short acquaintance the friendship on both sides became reciprocal. The Count had a daughter in whom was summed up all the graces of her sex. Donna Isabella was not more than sixteen, her person, by every one who beheld her, was stiled enchanting; and her conversation was brightened by the most engaging vivacity. When I had been a few times



times at the hotel; her father in terms of friendship and politeness proposed an alliance between us; I stared at the proposal, no one could be more sensible of the young lady's perfections, but I had an image in my breast that had entirely secured me from the power of her charms. The Count took no notice of my confusion, but attributing my silence to modesty, looked upon himself already as my father, and on my next visit introduced me to his daughter as a lover.

Guess how ridiculous I must look; complaisance would not suffer me to acquaint the lovely Isabella that the Count had mistaken my silence for acquiescence. I treated

ed her with all that respect which is due to an amiable object; but determined to leave Turin as soon as I had finished the business which detained me. During this mock courtship, for the young lady appeared no more affected with the belle passion than myself: the Marquis De N—— arrived at her father's: the first glance from the fine eyes of Isabella deprived him of his liberty: he sighed, he gazed, every word, every action, breathed the wishes of his soul. I beheld with pleasure the growing flame; and sincerely wished it might diffuse itself to the bosom of my mistress. As it is not always possible to read in the countenance what passes in the soul: the Marquis

unfortunately looked upon me as his rival; and finding Isabella remained insensible to the tender glances he bestowed on her, very gallantly resolved to wreck his vengeance in the bosom of your friend.

As we had ever behaved to each other with the most profound respect. I had not the least suspicion of the honour he intended me. But going home from the Count's very late one evening, I found myself surrounded with bravos, and notwithstanding the valour with which I defended myself should certainly have fallen a victim to his jealousy if my faithful Ferdinand had not exerted himself in my defence.

fence. In proportion as my courage diminished, his seemed to increase : I was just sinking with the loss of blood, when, with a valour that was quite astonishing, in a person who had been so little used to arms, he disarmed two of the ruffians and laid them weltering at his feet. He then led me to my lodgings, and after conveying me to my chamber, flew immediately for a surgeon : though my wounds were slight, the loss of blood which I had sustained threw me into a fever, and it was some days before I was able to leave my bed : during my confinement the trusty youth was never absent a moment from my side ; he administered my medicines, and



watched over me with all the tenderness of a nurse.

One evening when I was meditating in what manner I should reward his faithful services: chancing to glance my eyes towards the place where he sat, I observed his face bedewed with tears, and in a moment discovered, what had never before entered my shallow brains, though every circumstance concurred to confirm it, that Ferdinand was some lovely female in disguise. That I might not overwhelm her with confusion, I kept this discovery to myself, and determined to behave as usual till some favourable minute confirmed me in my suspicions, and disclosed



disclosed the true cause of this heroic scheme.

When the apothecary called, he acquainted me it was requisite to breathe a vein, and ordering the necessary apparatus he immediately performed the operation; the fair unknown was appointed to hold the basin which received the purple stream; and notwithstanding the frequent changes of her countenance, maintained her post with the resolution of a stoic. About an hour after the departure of the apothecary, by an unlucky blow against the bed-post I set my arm a bleeding. Ferdinand was then in an adjoining room giving directions for my supper. I called to him in a

faint voice, and catching up the sheet, endeavoured to assuage the blood. No sooner did the lovely heroine enter my apartment than casting a look towards the bed, and uttering a loud shriek, she fell senseless on the floor. Resolved if possible to save her from the confusion of a discovery before the servants, I tied a handkerchief round my arm, and slipping on a night-gown flew to her assistance. After sprinkling her face with water, and rubbing her temples and forehead with eau de luce she began to revive, but was some minutes before she recovered the power of speech.

Take care of yourself, Monsieur,  
I am well, gazing round her, that  
arm !

arm ! O, I cannot bear to see the blood ! I raised her gently from the ground, and placing her on a sofa reclined the trembling charmer on my bosom. Be composed, Madam, I am now quite out of danger : the fright has stopt my bleeding ; but may I not, taking her hand in mine, be acquainted with the name of a lady to whom I am indebted for the preservation of my life ?

Is it possible that De Fal, fetching a deep sigh, should have forgotten the features of the weak, unfortunate ! La Roch. O, Sir, pardon ! pity a weakness that it was not in the power of reason to overcome, and if possible do not hate me.

It is that amiable woman ! cried I, pressing her to my bosom, while I gazed stedfastly on her languid face. Yes, no other could have been capable of such generous and disinterested affection ; and by what secret springs I was actuated, Charles, I know not, but throwing myself at her feet, I made her an immediate tender of my hand and fortune. The idea of the fair Jessica at that moment rushed upon my memory ; but gratitude gained the entire ascendancy. La Roch never before had appeared half so lovely, she had hazarded her life for my sake ; could I in honour refuse to employ the remainder of mine in the promoting of her happiness ? It is not in the power of words to express



express the pleasure that sparkled in her eyes, when she beheld me with respectful tenderness, suing for the honour of her hand ; but resuming an air of langour. No, Monsieur, it is an object worthy your esteem, after having been guilty of such a rash ! imprudent step !

You was ever, my dear, generous Girl, the object of De Fal's esteem. Love was till this hour a stranger to my breast, but the respect which I before entertained for the virtuous, and beautiful La Roche, is now ripened into the most disinterested and sincerest passion. Thus by the soothing powers of eloquence and love, I restored the dear girl to a state of serenity,



and composure ; but to prevent suspicion among the servants, it was concluded that she should continue in boy's clothes till I left Turin ; and then under the pretence of a quarrel, I am to part with my valet, and meeting with Mademoiselle La Roche by accident, insist upon her accompanying me to the castle in my carriage.

This, as from her frequent visits to my sister, she is no stranger to my servants, will be the only method to prevent a discovery ; and at the same time will render my journey far more agreeable than it would, was she to continue to act in her present character.

You

You now see, my Friend, that at a time I least thought of it, I am going to enter the list of domestic animals. If fortune should conduct you to the retreat of your Jessica, sans respect to birth, or fortune, follow my example — without either, she is worthy the scepter of a monarch. It will be needless to tell Sir Charles Dayers, that he and every one who has the honour of being his friend, will be ever welcome visitors at the castle of him, who is with unfeigned respect,

Your unalterable

DE FAL-

## LETTER XIX.

*Miss Rumney, to Miss Belfield.*

HADLEIGH GROVE.

OH, my Lucy! what a pleasing! what an enchanting discovery! never more tell me that there is nothing in dreams! Jessica, the virtuous, amiable Jessica is the sister of your Elmira. If I can compose my fluttered, joyous senses, I will endeavour to inform you in what manner I made this agreeable discovery, but must first acquaint you with the philosophy of my swain's behaviour. On our first arrival at the grove, Lady Oswald was set out  
on

on a charitable ramble, attended by Miss Chetwyn and Jessica; Miss Faulkner, and Miss Holgate met us in the court; take care my friend, cried I, gaily, as they advanced, this hour, this very hour will be fatal to your heart, and without waiting for my hero, I gave each of them a hand, and sprung out of the Phaeton; you may now drive back again, Sir Charles, I have no further occasion for you, laughing,

Mighty pretty, indeed! cries the lively Clara. What abject creatures this same love make us! no, no, Sir Charles, in spite of this little divinity I shall insist upon your becoming our visitor. Thomas, calling to the footman, conduct this  
gen-



## TO HADLEIGH

gentleman's servant to the coach-house. On our entrance in the saloon, the good girls began to rally us on the subject of our marriage, and, with an air of gaiety intreated the honour of being bride-maids; that you may depend on, Ladies, cried my swain, taking each of them by the hand, but the fair El-mira, has such an aversion to matrimony, that I fear it will be some time before I can prevail on her to figure in the character of Lady Davers; you have eloquence, Ladies, plead the cause of an impatient lover.

Did ever any body act the hypocrite better, Lucy?

IF



If I might prevail, replies Miss Holgate, Miss Rumney should figure as a bride this very afternoon; your dress my Dear is just adapted to the solemn farce.

Just then the ladies returned from their excursion; Sir Charles was too much engaged in conversation to observe them, untill they had reached the middle of the saloon, when turning to pay his compliments, the first object that struck his eyes, was his long lost fair.

To describe the various emotions which agitated his manly face, would puzzle even the pen of an historian, but recollecting his promise  
to

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to my ladyship, he had however the resolution to compose his features, and without taking any particular notice of Jessica, entered into a lively chat. The dear girl blushed when he first addressed them, but her artless countenance plainly shewed it was more owing to my former questions, than any partial sentiments, she entertained in his favour. His expressive eyes seemed to speak love every time they met mine. What strange reverse of fortune, brought my angel to this seat of happiness! Oh! Miss Rumney!! you have made me the happiest of my sex!

Those of your Elmira, replied,  
in the same intelligible language,  
be

be cautious, Sir Charles, the success of our scheme depends wholly on your philosophy.

He carefully observed their precepts, for during the whole day not a single glance or sentence pointed, out a discovery of his sentiments : the respectful tenderness with which he treated me, must have blinded the eyes of the most judicious person alive ; not one among them (except Miss Chetwyn) but who thought our marriage was within a few weeks of being solemnized ; Lady Oswald, even went so far as to congratulate us on our approaching happiness, and declared she would do herself the pleasure of being present at the nuptials. My  
phi-

philosopher, returned all their rallery with a gaiety that quite astonished me. You know, Lucy, notwithstanding my promise, it was now in my power to have revenged myself for his inconstancy, but the good soul seemed to think himself quite secure of a refusal. The day after our arrival at the grove, her ladyship gave a rural ball in honour of her visitors; all the neighbouring families were invited, and among the rest my gay Colonel. As the young ladies were employed the greatest part of the morning in giving directions for the entertainment, and setting out the desert; I gained a release for Miss Chetwyn, and taking Sir Charles for our escort, we walked  
 into



into the wood. Upon our swains observing it was a fine morning for fishing, Fanny was sent for a servant to bring the tackle, and bending our course towards the river, we amused ourselves in angling till dinner. As we were sitting on the bank, I observed something shine on the other side of the water, curiosity prompted me to see what it was; when I had expressed my wishes to my companions, Sir Charles arose, and scampering round the canal, returned in a few moments with the glittering prize. It was a Morocco pocket-book, Lucy, ornamented with an elegant gold clasp; as it was presented to my ladyship, I took the liberty of opening it, and on the first page beheld in a pretty Italian hand



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hand, Sophia Rumney, and underneath it the following lines :

“ Shun vain ambition that delusive fire,  
 “ Which tends each meteor passion to inspire;  
 “ For sage experience but too plainly shows,  
 “ Who dream of glories often wake to woes,  
 “ While unambitious thoughts, your mind  
     “ employ,  
 “ You’ll sleep secure, and only wake to joy.”

Judge, my Friend, how violent must be my agitation and astonishment, to behold the name and characters of a parent who had been above sixteen years rank’d among the dead. Several memorandums that were dated from the time my mama left England, plainly confirmed me in the belief that it was her’s, but how, or by whom it could

could be conveyed to that place, was a mystery that not one of us could explain. When we returned to the house, I related my little adventure to Lady Ofwald, and was just drawing the precious relic from my pocket, when Jessica and Miss Holgate, entered the apartment with a large basket of strawberries. Come hither, Children, cried her ladyship, see how fortunate, Miss Rumney has been this morning. They both immediately advanced, and no sooner had Jessica, cast her eyes on the pocket-book, than her fine face was diffused with blushes. Do you know the owner of it, Jessy? asks Miss Holgate, you look my Dear, as if you had seen it before.

It

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It is mine, Ladies, blushing still more deeply, I dropt it yesterday in our walk to the cottages.

Yours! exclaimed I, tell me my Dear Jessica, by what means came you possessed of it?

The dear girl appeared greatly embarrassed, but resuming her composure: Your question is such, Miss Rumney, that may justly claim an immediate answer, it is a subject I would rather have wished to have evaded, but as you have without doubt some particular reasons for asking it; I shall without any hesitation acquaint you, that the pocket-book you have now in your hand, and a few other trifles  
are

are my only remembrancers of an amiable parent, who died during my infancy. I thought my Dear, interrupted Lady Oswald, your parents had been parisiens.

I wished not, Dearest Madam, to undeceive you, the good old man to whom I owe the advantages of a virtuous education, was a native of Paris, but those from whom I derived my birth were of English extraction, and born of affluent fortunes.

Speak, my Dear Jessica! exclaimed I, the tears starting in my eyes, was that your mama, whose name is wrote in this pocket book? but why do I ask? it cannot be! that



that amiable woman, has long been buried in the watry deep.

- If I am not greatly mistaken, Jessy, says her ladyship, Miss Rumney is nearly interested in your history; was you the only child your parents had? no, Madam, I was the youngest of two daughters; Mira the eldest was left in England while my father set out on a voyage to Florence, accompanied by—

It is her! it is my sister! Oh, Jessica! throwing myself into her arms, by what unheard of miracle, did you escape a watry grave? the surprize and joy, were too powerful for my spirits, I fainted in her arms: during this afflicting scene,

Sir



Sir Charles entered the saloon, without asking any questions, he flew back for some water, sprinkling it plentifully on my face, in a few moments I recovered, as soon as I was able to speak, I took the hand of my new found sister, and presenting it to Sir Charles, love her my Friend, you loved her before on her own account, you must now love her on mine: my spirits were in such a tremour, I hardly knew what I said. Sir Charles appeared quite astonished at my behaviour, but took the profered hand, and raising it to his lips, testified his sense of the obligation.

This lovely girl is my sister, Sir, tell him, Good Folks, my joy will

not permit me to explain myself.

Poor Jessica blushed like scarlet when I laid my injunctions on Sir Charles to love her, but betrayed not the least astonishment; when she first discovered me to be her sister, her transports were equal to mine, she embraced me, wept on my neck, and a thousand times thanked Heaven for its goodness, but appeared throughout the scene as if it was an event she had long expected. When our transports became more calm, we sat down to table, but joy totally deprived us of our appetite. Sir Charles, impatient to be acquainted with the particulars of this discovery, in-  
treated

treated us to accompany him in a walk. I believe it was the mutual wish of all three, for as soon as the cloth was removed, we, by joint consent stole into the garden.

How happy! exclaimed we all, as soon as we were out of the house, has been the occurrences of this morning! Thrice happy for me, repeated the baronet, that the mistress of my affections should prove the sister of my Elmira! As this sentence was pronounced rather in a lower key, it was not taken notice of by my sister, and she still remained in the belief that I was the object of his affection. When we were seated in the pavilion, I intrusted her to favour me with the

particulars of her life ; I am yet, my dear Jessica, unacquainted with the fate of my mama.

I was too young, my Dear, to be sensible of the misfortune that deprived us of our parents, but the good old man who saved us from the deep, has since I have been of riper years, informed me that my mama was an English lady of family and fortune, and that being shipwrecked on a voyage to Florence, she lost her husband, and had it not been for his friendly assistance, herself and infant must have shared the same unhappy fate ; he conducted us to his cottage, and after the death of my mama, which happened within three years afterwards, treated me with



with all the tenderness of a father. What on earth, my Love, interrupted I, could induce my mama to end her days in obscurity, and die, unknown, in the cottage of a peasant?

The loss of my father was a shock too great for her tender constitution; she never after recovered her serenity; the first transports of her grief, when over, ended in a settled melancholy, and had she attempted a return to England, I have often heard my good friend say, that her strength would have been unequal to the voyage. It certainly was something amazing that my mama should leave a helpless orphan to the protection of strangers,



and those too in so low a sphere, when she had so many friends in her native country.

Did you never, my dear Jessica, learn the true motive of my mama's conduct in that respect ?

Yes, my Dear, the old gentleman's wife had lived in some genteel families, and received an education far superior to the generality of the peasants. As she was of a disposition perfectly humane and tender, my mama admitted her to some degree of confidence, and I have frequently heard her say, that she believed the dear lady, that was the title these worthy people always gave our unhappy parent, entertained

tained a thorough contempt of riches, and on that account was far happier in the thoughts of leaving me to the protection of an humble virtuous peasant, than she should, had I been left in a state of affluence, and surrounded with all the temptations of an ensnaring world. The lines written in the first leaf of her pocket-book, plainly testified that the good woman was not mistaken in regard to her sentiments, and as soon as I arrived at an age capable of improving by precept, I engraved them stedfastly in my heart. Though conscious that I was born to a more exalted state, my constant study has been to fulfill the duties of my humble station: it is true I have sometimes felt a pang at seeing my com-

panions finer than myself, but it was a pain too short-lived, too transient, to render me dissatisfied with my lot. If ever I accused fate of unkindness, it was on reflection that I had a sister who was ignorant that such a being as myself existed. The hopes of being one day fortunate enough to meet with a person so nearly related to my ill-fated parents, was my greatest inducement for quitting the good old man, to whose kindness I owed every blessing I then enjoyed.

Did not some secret instinct tell you, my Dear, that I was that person? I am sure, from the first moment of beholding my Jessica, I felt

I felt for her all the affection of a sister.

The first time, my Love, that I heard Fanny mention a Miss Rumney, my heart bounded with delight, but on enquiring more particularly into your family, and finding your father had not been dead above eleven years, and had left you an immense fortune, I checked the vain emotions: on your arrival at the grove they intruded with greater force; my companions calling you Elmira, revived the pleasing flutter, and I again gave way to the aspiring hopes of finding you my sister: the only consideration which kept me silent, and hindered me from throwing myself



into your arms, was the knowledge of your approaching marriage ; it will appear, thought I, not as a claim to the affection of Miss Rumney, but as a claim to her fortune : no ! I am determined to remain silent till fate shall, by some unforeseen adventure, disclose the secret of my birth ! Every day confirmed me more in my conjectures ; once, during the last visit at Lady Oswald's, my Elmira mentioned that her mama and an infant sister were drowned in a voyage to Florence ; there then needed no further proof, but I could not prevail on myself to claim the tender tie. It was entirely by accident that I dropt my pocket-book, I had missed it in the morning, but as I could not make any enquiries



quiries after it, without describing minutely the contents, I passed over my loss in silence.

Unkind Jessica, I exclaimed, I, to deprive me so long of the happiness of knowing that I had a sister! But where is the good old man? he shall immediately be rewarded for his goodness to my Jessy. Let it be my task to convey the joyful tidings, said Sir Charles, who had hitherto sat gazing silently on her lovely face, and listening with raptures to every sentence that fell from her bewitching tongue. As he pronounced these words, her ladyship joined us.

CH 6 I beg

I beg you pardon, Good Folks, for intruding on your retirement, but I was afraid you were concerting some scheme to deprive me of my young friend; I have experienced so much happiness in her company, that I can, on no consideration, think of parting with her. Jessy is your sister, Miss Rumney, but, at the same time you must remember, she is my daughter. As a particular favour I shall resign her to you till after the celebration of your nuptials, but as soon as the hurry of visiting is over, I shall again assert my right.

As her ladyship spoke this, a sigh heaved from the lovely bosom of Jessica. She cast down her eyes, and for some

some moments was unable to look up. You are serious, my Dear, said her benefactress, taking her hand, with a look that plainly shewed the sincerity of her friendship; should you rather live entirely with your sister? This question brought tears into her eyes. No, Madam, throwing herself at her ladyship's feet, I love my sister, but while I have life, it shall be spent in testifying my gratitude to Lady Oswald.

The amiable woman raised her with maternal tenderness, and straining her to her bosom; happy, my dear Jessica, will be the man, who has the happiness to merit your affection! How enviable would have been the situation of Mr. Rumney, had

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had he lived to have been witness to this happy meeting! You appear only a spectator, Sir Charles, not a sharer, in the general joy; what is become of your vivacity?

I suppose, Madam, the good soul is meditating on the subject of his approaching happiness; but to punish him for his gravity, I here vow before all the company present (Clara and Fanny had just joined us) never to be Lady Davers!

Surprize was painted on every face. Not be Lady Davers! exclaimed her ladyship; surely, Miss Rumney, you joke! No, Madam, I am serious upon my honour; but, to prevent the good soul's hanging him-



himself in his garters, I intend to make him a present of Jeffy. Look at the sweet girl, Sir Charles; do you think it will be a bad exchange? The poor baronet looked quite embarrassed, and my sister's fine face was crimsoned over with blushes. Come, come, continued I, laughing, do not look so grave, you have acted the hypocrite long enough, it is now time to throw off the mask; so, my good Friend, with your leave, I shall display you to the company in your true colours.

I then, Lucy, gave them a detail of his passion for Jessica, and the farce was concluded by an open declaration on the side of my sister, that had providence placed her in  
a higher



a higher sphere, she should ever have looked upon Sir Charles as the man most worthy of her esteem, but till that moment she had never dared to raise her thoughts to a person so greatly her superior in point of fortune.

This you may be sure was sufficient to raise the spirits of her lover, and my gay Colonel soon after joining us, we concluded the evening with a ball. The honest red-coat finding our affairs in such a flourishing situation, sues, my Dear, for an early day. Shall I, by way of punishment for his presumption, banish him entirely from my presence, or take pity on his sufferings? The latter, methinks you say, will  
be

be most conducive to my own happiness. Well, then, it shall be so; but first, Lucy, must extort a promise from you to be present at our nuptials.

To-morrow we return to Ashton-hall, to acquaint the good folks of this pleasing discovery, and to present to them my amiable sister; Miss Chetwyn accompanies us, and, after staying there a fortnight, we are to whirl back again to the grove, where her ladyship insists upon our nuptials being celebrated. Sir Charles drives his dear in the phaeton, and Fanny and your humble servant are to be stewed up in the post-chariot. My swain, it seems, would gladly have been one of the party;

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party; but an old uncle, who has just taken it into his head to make his exit from this troublesome world, intreats his company in Yorkshire, in order to bestow on him his last blessing, with the addition of a pretty estate. So pleasing a mandate you may be sure, Lucy, was obeyed without any violent repugnance; and with a promise of meeting us on our return to the grove, the honest soul left us to follow our own cogitations. I am summoned to tea; so adieu, my Dear, till our arrival at the hall.

Your's,

E. RUMNEY.

LET-

## LETTER XX.

*The Same to the Same.*

ASHTON-HALL.

GREAT, my Lucy, was the Ashton's joy, on my presenting to them a sister so extremely amiable; the whole village, and several adjacent ones, were summoned to celebrate the happy day; Miss Kitty Homespun made one of the party: her sister, it seems, without giving any of her worshipful family an intimation of her design, has taken the liberty of marching off to Scotland with our old friend the curate, and the grief of her mama would  
 not



not permit her to accompany Miss Kitty to the hall. Monsieur Gavot still continues our constant visitor, so you may be sure, my Dear, he did not absent himself on this occasion. Jessy is become one of his greatest favourites; and he this morning intreated to be permitted the honour of bestowing her on Sir Charles. Mr. Ashton is to do the same good office to my Colonel. So you see, Lucy, the most material preliminaries are settled. Here comes, Mrs. Sally; what important message draws her to my closet?

An invitation from Miss Home-  
spun to attend her to the mansion of  
her brother. Her mama thinks a  
little of our sprightly conversation  
would

would rouse him from his lethargy. I must go and consult my fair companions: if they are in the humour to take this whimsical jaunt, I shall have no objection to the tour.

They are in high glee, even at the idea of such a visit. Sir Charles and Gavot escort us on horseback. I must dedicate an hour to the duties of my toilette, and then, Lucy, allons to the villa of 'Squire Anthony.

*In Continuation.*

Another strange but pleasing adventure, my Dear. I know you are a dear friend to formality, so will give you things just as they occurred.

occurred. As our chariot drove through B---- Park, which lies contiguous to the Homespun's family seat, Jessica observed two elegant looking sparks sitting on one of the benches, and seemingly very attentive on a book which they were reading. Fanny and Miss Homespun passed without taking any notice of them, but our carriage driving rather closer than their's, I thought I had some faint idea of their features, but at that time could not recollect where it was that I had before seen them. When we arrived at the seat of the young 'squire, the housekeeper conducted us into a magnificent and nobly-furnished parlour, which I found, by the surprise Miss Kitty testified, had been hung

hung and newly furnished since the departure of her mama. As we entered, Heavens! cries she, what fine doings has been here! prettily fancied too, upon second thoughts, surveying herself in an elegant glass; Tony has not laid out his money for nothing, I see; but where is my brother, Nanny? turning to the housekeeper. Mrs. Ann informed her that the young 'squire and his tutor were gone to take a walk, but she expected them back every minute, adding, it was the hour which they generally spent in the music-room. Music-room! repeated Miss Kitty, what kind of a place is that? Do, Ladies, let us go and see this new-built room, for I am sure there was no such place when



when we came away. It is not new-built, Miss, says the maid; it is only the back parlour new hung, and furnished with several pieces of music, which my master sent for from London soon after the young gentleman came. No matter for that, it is new to me; come, Ladies, let us go.

We all followed our conductress, and upon entering the apartment, found it indeed worthy the title of a music-room; there was a large organ, a harpsichord, bass-viol, two violoncellos, and several other instruments. As I was expressing my surprize to Miss Chetwyn on this extraordinary change in the young squire's disposition, Sir Charles took  
the

the hand of my sister, and, with a tender air, led her to the harpsichord ; as she is of all her sex the most amiable and engaging, you may imagine, my Dear, she did not deny him the favour of a song. Fanny and myself accompanied her with our voices, and was just singing the third verse of Kate of Aberdeen, when Mrs. Ann came to inform us, her master was returned from his walk, and would be glad to see us in the parlour. She hardly had time to articulate her message, before the young gentleman made his appearance in propria personæ, and to my unspeakable surprize we found him to be one of those elegant figures we had seen sitting in the park.

The difference of his behaviour, for he addressed us with an unaffected air of ease and dignity, left Miss Homespun some room to doubt his being her brother ; but when he gave her a friendly salute, and enquired after the health of his mother, she began to be convinced. It is you to be sure, Tony ; but you are so unaccountably altered, that I can hardly believe my own eyes : for Heaven's sake, what is come on you of late ? That you and I will talk of another time ; but come, Ladies, give me leave to attend you to the parlour.

Never, Lucy, did you behold so advantageous a metamorphose as has been made on this young gentleman!

his

his clothes, which were a pale blue trimmed with silver, and a tambour waistcoat of the same colour, perfectly became him, and his hair, which was dressed au dernier goût, gave an air of dignity to a face which nature had endowed with no small share of beauty, but had before been obscured by the rusticity of his appearance.

These new attractions engaged our attention as we followed him to the parlour, but upon entering into conversation, I was still more astonished at the extraordinary improvements of his mind; he conversed with grace and spirit, nor did any part of his behaviour betray the most



trifling tincture of diffidence or timidity.

My surprize I believe was painted on my countenance ; for giving me an expressive look : It is to you, Madam, said he, in a low voice, that I am indebted for this extraordinary change ; the accomplishments I beheld you mistress of, taught me a knowledge of my own deficiencies in point of education, and with a view of rendering myself an object more worthy of your friendship, I have attempted a reformation, and while actuated by so powerful a motive, flatter myself, that I shall every day make some new improvements.

If

If I have been any ways instrumental to the change, I have the pleasure to behold in you, replied I, blushing like scarlet, I shall think, Sir, that my visit to your mother was extremely fortunate; but I am rather inclined to think it was your own good sense that discovered the injury that had been done you in your education, and pointed out to you the proper means of procuring that instruction of which you had hitherto been deprived; but to whatever motive we may attribute this change, give me leave most sincerely to congratulate you on it.

The tea just then coming in, put an end to our chat, and I joined the company, the greatest part of which

had retired to a distant window, to make their observations on a fine serpentine river, which ran meandering through the adjoining meadows. Monsieur Gavor, who had been assiduously pointing out the beauties of the prospect to my sister, now recollected that he had seen a young gentleman with the squire as we came through the park, and imagining it was his tutor, asked if we should not be favoured with his company to tea. Mr. Portland is retired to write letters, Sir, replied Mr. Hornespun, but I will send a servant to acquaint him that the ladies wait tea, and make no doubt but he will attend them with a great deal of pleasure.

At the name of Portland, I observed Miss Chetwynn change colour, and indeed the name had some little effect upon your Elmira, but as the world produces so many people of the same name, I had not the least suspicion of its being her lover, and had just talked her into a state of composure, when the entrance of the young stranger, threw us all into a consternation; Fanny fainted in my arms; Gavot started from his chair, and exclaiming, It is he! it is my nephew! ran eagerly to embrace Portland, who stood motionless as a statue, and would certainly have dropt on the floor, had not the friendly arms of Homesbur and his uncle supported him. Jessica, and Sir Charles, were wholly



taken up in administering restoratives to Fanny, and Miss Kitty found full employment in asking questions, but as none of us were either capable or willing to satisfy her curiosity, she changed the subject, and began to afford us a little of her assistance, in our attendance on the sick ; when we had in some measure recovered our patient, I led her out of the room, and endeavoured to sooth her into a state of serenity ; in this I did not however succeed so well as I could have wished, but she promised to disguise her sensations as much as possible before the company, and as none of them but myself was acquainted with her history, we returned to the parlour without giving any one present,

present, the least suspicion of the cause of her sudden illness. The emotion of Portland, was attributed to his unexpected meeting with his uncle, and I believe the bustle which this scene occasioned, had put it out of every one's power to make their observations on Miss Chetwyn. The embarrassment which appeared in the face of the poor young gentleman; plainly shewed he wished an eclaircissement, but hardly dared to hope it. I was determined to effect one, for from his open and illumined countenance, I made no doubt but he would still (notwithstanding the blackness of appearances) prove himself worthy the affections of my friend; and to this end, as soon as

tea was over, took the arm of the downcast, drooping Fanny, who had not once yet lifted her eyes towards her lover, and giving him a side glance, which plainly said, follow us, walked into the garden. I imagine it was some time before he could assume a sufficient share of courage and composure to obey this silent summons, for we had spent above half an hour in talking over the painful subject, before the dejected youth, made his appearance. Under what inauspicious planet was my Portland born ! exclaimed, Miss Chetwyn, as we entered the garden ; one while I beheld him as a gentleman of rank and fortune, he next appeared to me as a robber, I now behold him as the tutor of a  
country

country squire. Oh! my Elmira! by what strange caprice of temper, does he assume so many whimsical and contradictory characters!

To explain the meaning of the young gentleman's conduct, is indeed, my Dear, a task too difficult for the abilities of your Elmira; but I dare venture to affirm, that he will still prove himself deserving of your affection, and clear up this apparent mystery in a manner that will fully convince you of his innocence.

That, I pray Heaven he may not attempt! to clear himself of a crime we both were witness to, is impossible, and to assign a cause for a

H. 6.

thing;



thing which will admit of no defence, would be only an aggravation of his guilt. Why, my dear, El-mira, did you lead me hither? I cannot, cannot, see him!

Be composed, my Love, whispered I, just then observing that Portland, was coming up the walk. Let him plead guilty, if he is so; if he do not, believe him innocent; that countenance is too honest, to be capable of deception.

The young gentleman now advanced dejectedly towards us, and finding himself at the feet of Miss Chetwyn, who had turned herself aside to conceal her emotion. Do not! oh do not! exclaimed the amiable

amiable youth, turn thus cruelly from a man who has ruined himself to preserve your life ; hear ere you condemn him ! I was once dear to you ! Let the remembrance of past pains and pleasures, prevail on you to listen a few minutes to the unhappy Portland !

My fair friend could no longer support this moving scene ; tears fell in torrents from her lovely eyes. Rise, Sir, said she, giving him her trembling hand, and supporting herself by the shoulder, I cannot bear to see you in that humble posture ; if it is me you owe your misfortunes to you surely need not kneel.

Her

Her lover encouraged by these  
 sounds, once more ventured to lift  
 his eyes towards her face, and press-  
 ing the proffered hand to his bosom,  
 raised himself from the ground.

We walked gloomily to an ar-  
 bour at the termination of the walk,  
 Fanny still leaning on my arm, and  
 entering it, seated ourselves without  
 breaking silence.

Imagining I should rather be a  
 constraint upon Portland, I made  
 an attempt to withdraw. You  
 shall not leave me Miss Rumney,  
 you know my history; if the part-  
 ner of my former miseries has met  
 with still greater misfortunes since  
 our separation, your pity will render  
 the

the burthen of our woes less heavy.  
He can have nothing to tell me  
that is not proper my friend should  
know.

Still fearing that my presence  
would prevent their giving vent to  
the fulness of their hearts, I conti-  
nued standing; not hardly knowing  
whether it would be most prudent  
to go or stay.

Deprive us not of your company,  
Madam, said Portland, taking my  
hand and reseating me. The friend  
of my Fanny, must listen to a tale,  
that if she has a sympathetic heart,  
will, I flatter myself, make her also  
the friend of Portland.

After



After an assurance of his unalterable attachment, and of his never having deviated from the paths of constancy and honour. The unfortunate young gentleman gave us his history in the following manner.

As you are acquainted, Madam, with Miss Chetwyn's past adventures, I make no doubt but you as well as her dear self, are ready to accuse me of cruelty, in leaving her almost friendless in a desert island; alas! how much did that separation rend my heart! but it was to save a life far dearer than my own, that I consented to make that dreadful sacrifice. As I was standing by the sea-side impatient for the arrival of some vessel that might convey us to  
 England,

England, I heard a great shouting at a small distance from the shore. I listened some moments before I could perceive from whence it came, when turning hastily around, I beheld a great number of armed men behind me. These, I afterwards found, had landed on the other side of the island, and came with an intent to plunder the inhabitants, as they expressed the intention of their landing to each other. I was not long ignorant of the barbarous scheme they had planned against us, and the thoughts of my Fanny's becoming a prey to the barbarians, soon determined me in what manner to proceed; so as to prevent their going further into the island. When some of the foremost of the

crew

crew had laid hold of me, the chief of them approached, and in an imperious tone desired to know the number of the inhabitants? Alas! Sir! cried I, there are none; it is entirely an uncultivated desert, fate threw me on the island a few days ago, and I have been starving ever since; the wild beasts are here so ravenous that they are ready to devour one another, and it is on this spot only that I could abide with safety.

The account I gave them, at once stopped their progress, but thinking a small prize better than none, they hauled me to their vessel; and putting immediately to sea, tore me from all my soul held dear.

In  
vain

vain did I plead my birth and fortune ; I was sold, and in a country where I had no friends to ransom me, was a slave almost sixteen months, but by my diligence and assiduity I at length gained the heart of my master, and after giving him a relation of my misfortunes, he bestowed on me my liberty, and presented me with a purse in which was sufficient to defray my expences to England. Though it was almost improbable that my Fanny should remain in the island, I discarded my course thither, instead of returning to my native country, and there met with what was near depriving me of my senses ! Not the most trifling relics of the cave where I left my charmer was now remaining ; a monument

numment erected to the memory of the good old sage, was the only friend that could inform me of their fate; and that served only to increase my misery, as it left me in an uncertainty whether my Fanny was still living.

In this deplorable situation I returned to England, and to render my fate still more desperate fortune had there reserved for me a stroke almost as heavy as the former. My father, who was the only relation I had then in England, had sold his family estate; and thinking he had lost his only son, was gone to end his days in a foreign country. In vain did I enquire of his acquaintance into what clime he had retired.



retired : not one of them could give me the most trifling intimation. Those friends who had favoured me with their esteem before I left the country, were now most of them dead, and those few which were remaining, no longer continued so, than while courted by prosperity. For some weeks I lived wholly upon the little stock of money I had remaining of what was given me by my generous master ; but finding that it would soon become insufficient to purchase the necessaries of life, I determined to apply to some merchant for a place in his counting-house. I now utterly despaired of ever beholding the face of my Fanny ; and without her all situations were alike disagreeable : none could  
have

have conferred happiness unless she had shared it with me. I soon succeeded according to my wishes, and in a few days got settled in a genteel family. Another young gentleman that was in the same office lodged with me, and as he too appeared to be unhappy, we soon became inseparable companions. Our Sundays were generally spent in some of the public gardens, but a mutual pride actuated the soul of both, and forbid us to associate with others of our profession. One evening as we were walking towards Hammer-smith, my friend was called aside by an acquaintance; and as I every minute expected him to re-join me, I proceeded slowly on, but I had not walked twenty yards before

fore I was attacked by two foot-pads ; they robbed me of what little cash I had in my pocket, and had laid me on the ground with a large club which one of them carried in his hand, when my companion hearing me groan, flew to the spot, and in a few moments dispersed the villains ; he then raised me from the ground, and finding I had received a large contusion in my head, conveyed me to a surgeon. When my wound was dressed we returned home in a coach, and for some days I was not able to leave my room ; during which time this humane and tender friend constantly attended me. One morning I observed an unusual melancholy painted on his face ; friendship

ship and my solicitude for his welfare, prompted me to enquire tenderly into the cause. You have a right my dearest Friend, said he, to my unlimited confidence, but as my misfortunes have chiefly arisen from my own indiscretion, I have evaded a confession of them, least when acquainted with my follies, you should spurn me as a wretch unworthy of your friendship ; but my present situation lays me under a necessity, not only of imploring your advice, but your assistance. Gratitude to my deliverer, and affection for my friend, prompted me to promise that in whatever difficulties he was involved ; and into whatever misfortunes plunged, he might depend upon my service and assistance, and

fatal

fatal indeed might this promise have proved to me, had not providence interposed in my behalf.

He acquainted me that he was the son of a clergyman in the West of England, and educated at the university, but an uncle dying when he was about one and twenty, and leaving him two thousand pounds, he quitted college, and coming immediately to town, left his studies to pursue a life of pleasure. When he had resided in London about three or four months, he fell in love with a tradesman's daughter in the city, and as her father was looked upon to be in a capacity of bestowing on her a genteel fortune, paid his addresses to her in an open and



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honourable manner. One evening, as they sat exchanging mutual vows of constancy, she took a piece of paper, and scribbled over a kind of bond, which laid him under an obligation either to marry her or forfeit eight hundred pounds, telling him, laughing, that if he loved her he would not refuse to sign it. As he had then no suspicion of the baseness of her disposition, he complied without hesitation, but a few weeks after finding her rather too intimate with her father's clerk, he had great reason to repent his folly: he reproached her with her falshood, and intreated her to return the bond, declaring that whatever might be the consequence, he would never fulfill his engagement.

ment. This he informed me he could never persuade her to, and that her father dying soon after, she led a life of wantonness and pleasure, which, in a short time, consumed what little fortune had been left her. The greatest part of his, I found, was squandered away in the same indiscreet manner, but reason dawning on his soul before it was too late, he had deposited his last five hundred in the stocks, and got recommended to the family he was now in: here he had for some time lived very contentedly, when his artful mistress found him out, and sent him a letter to acquaint him that she should immediately proceed to prosecution, if he refused to marry her. This was the trouble he was

then involved in, and which I had, without consideration, promised to free him from.

If you could any ways contrive to get the bond away from her, Portland, said he, I should have no farther care, but that, I am afraid, will not be easily effected. Every thing may be effected where there is a good will, replied I; only point out her lodgings to me, and I will make myself master of the prize. Business then obliged us to separate, and I did not see him till the next evening, when he came into my room with looks that plainly indicated his having met with something pleasing.

I have

I have now, said he, an opportunity of putting your friendship to the proof. An acquaintance has just now informed me that my fair one sets out to-morrow in a post-chariot and pair, with another young lady of her profession, that is going to spend a few weeks at the country seat of Lord C——, and that lies directly in the road to B——, where we sometimes go to transact business for our master; if you could contrive to way-lay the carriage, and personate a highwayman, the fright of the ladies would make them immediately deliver their purses, and I am convinced Miss R—— always carries the bond in her's. To prevent being pursued and taken as a robber, take out only

the paper, and return their money, telling them at the same time, that you act under my commission, and I shall ever after look upon you as my sincerest and most valuable friend.

As I had no doubt but this scheme might be carried into execution without any bad consequences following, I undertook the affair without any hesitation, and as I had no other view than to serve my friend, did not fear but I should stand justified in the eyes of Heaven. The description he had given me both of the liveries and the carriage, left, as I then thought, no possibility of my making a mistake, and I set out, not however, without some little repugnance



pugnance at the business I was going to undertake. When I came to the appointed spot, I fixed myself to such advantage, that I could see every carriage which passed the road, without running the hazard of being observed, and had not waited above fifteen minutes, before I saw one that perfectly answered the description: as it drew nearer, I saw in it two young ladies, and now thought myself quite secure of my prey. I stopped the chaise, but the thoughts of what I was personating took away my courage, and obliged me to avert my head: upon turning it to receive what I had demanded, I thought I knew the features of one of the young ladies, and a second glance con-

vinced me it was my Fanny. You was witness, Miss Rumney, to my agitation; I fled, distraction pursued my steps: the thoughts of being known by that amiable woman, was a dagger to my heart. I returned, and seeking my friend, loaded him with curses: in vain did he endeavour to appease me, convinced that it was him only who had been the cause of my making such a gross mistake. I determined never more to see his face, and pretending I had lost a friend in the country, immediately left the family I was in, and took lodgings in a remote part of the city. In the first transports of my passion, I resolved to seek my charmer, and throw myself at her feet with the

hopes

hopes of obtaining her pity and forgiveness; but a recollection of the great change of fortune I had experienced since I was happy in her affection, and of the aversion which my late manœuvre must consequently raise in her gentle bosom, made me change my resolution, and determined me to end my days in lamenting my adverse fate. While I was in the height of desperation, I met with an old school-fellow in one of my morning rambles, and upon finding I was not engaged, he insisted upon my taking a dinner with him at his inn. The gravity of my countenance gave him immediate cause to suspect I had been unfortunate, and after giving me a brief account of the par-

I. 5                    ticular.

particular events which had happened to him since our parting, acquainted me that he was now rector of a small parish, about twelve miles from London, at which place I should ever meet with a hearty welcome; but the gloom which is imprinted on your face, said he, tells me, my Friend, that you have met with a change of fortune, perhaps it may be in my power to serve you, make me the confidant of your misfortunes, and depend upon my most faithful services. The zeal which Mr. Dimock had always shewn for my welfare in our juvenile years, left me no room to doubt the sincerity of his professions, and without any hesitation I gave him a circumstantial detail of  
of



of my adventures from the time that I left England, concealing nothing but the name of the young lady who reigned sole mistress of my affection, and whose loss I looked upon to be irreparable. The tears which bedewed his face, expressed more eloquently the emotions of a sympathetic heart, than all the rhetoric of friendship; and this unfeigned friend appeared not only touched by a repetition of my misfortunes, but lent all his aid in his endeavours to redress them. He persuaded me not to indulge my grief by leading an indolent and inactive life, but to seek out some employment that might amuse my mind, at the same time that it procured me a genteel support; and finding I was



no ways inclinable to engage in a mercantile life, promised to lend me all his interest in procuring the place of a tutor in some genteel family. A month had not elapsed after his return into the country, before I received a letter to acquaint me that he had succeeded according to his wishes, and I left London to accept the post in which you now find me.

This, Ladies, is a true account of my misfortunes ; the unexpected meeting with my uncle has redressed those which relate to the gifts of fortune, but the point most essential to my happiness, is the forgiveness and recovery of Miss Chetwyn's affection : if that is denied me, I  
must

must still remain miserable, notwithstanding the most splendid fortune courts my acceptance.

Far be it from your Fanny to pronounce him wretched, replied my friend, whom she esteems beyond all his sex. No, Portland, I have never ceased to love you; and when I thought you departed from the paths of virtue, I mourned the loss, as that of a most inestimable treasure. To forget your former goodness was impossible, but the thoughts of your having deviated from the laws of honour and rectitude, determined me to drive your image from my bosom: judge then how pleasing are my sensations to find you not only sincere but innocent, innocent  
of

of offence both to God and man!  
But how, Portland, did you discover  
Monfieur Gavot to be your  
uncle ?

I knew him not till I found myself  
in his arms ; the fight of my dearest  
Fanny had riveted me to the  
ground, and notwithstanding his  
kind embraces, it was some minutes  
before I could recollect his features.  
When I had in some degree reco-  
vered my composure, he acquainted  
me that my father, imagining me  
dead, had left England, and soon  
after falling into a decline, sent for  
him from Montpelier, to which  
place he had been gone some  
months, and in a short time dying,  
had left him sole executor to a large  
landed

landed estate in England, and an immense fortune in the funds. This, with the addition of his own estate, which is not inconsiderable, he has resigned to me, and reserved only to himself a genteel sufficiency to support him the remainder of his days.

What unparalleled generosity! exclaimed Miss Chetwyn.

But hearkee, my Friend, interrupted I, to let you into a little bit of a secret, this same uncle of your's has been very near presenting you with a new aunt; take care, he is a formidable rival, I assure you; do not you hear how greatly the fickle

puff



puls is enraptured at his generosity ?

Come, come, no more of that at present, my Dear, another time I will acquaint him with the whole ; but the company must by this time wonder what is become of us, let us return to the parlour, giving Portland her hand. We sauntered towards the house, but with what different sensations to those with which we left it ! Joy was now painted on every countenance ; we shall now all three of us be happy, thought I : how pleasing the idea !

At the end of the walk we met Jessica leaning on the arm of her  
Sir



Sir Charles ; the dear girl looked at me, as if eager to know the result of what had passed. Fanny is happy, whispered I, let that intelligence satisfy my dearest sister till we return to the hall, I will then inform her more.

On entering the parlour, we found Monsieur Gavot, and Mr. Hornospun, very deeply engaged in conversation, and upon our entrance the former arose, and taking the hand of his nephew, led him to the latter.

You have been pleased, Sir, to compliment this young gentleman with the title of your tutor, and in that humble station to ascribe to him  
the

the greatest degree of merit. You will now behold him in a different sphere of life, but in whatever station, I think I may venture to affirm that you will find him equally ready to contribute to your instruction, as when in that post to which your bounty raised him.

No change of fortune, said Portland, will, I hope, Sir, be powerful enough to make me forget my friends, if Mr. Homespun will still continue to honour me with his esteem, I shall aid his studies with the greatest pleasure; and though the unexpected change I have this day met with will oblige me to leave his hospitable mansion for a few days, yet I shall return to my office with  
the

the most unfeigned satisfaction, and if it is his desire will not quit his family till I have perfected him in the several sciences which he has so successively undertaken.

Your condescension, Sir, is extreme, replied the young 'squire, but though I must lament your absence, I cannot permit a gentleman so greatly my superior to continue in the character of my tutor; if you will honour me with your friendship, I will endeavour to merit that distinction by the most assiduous application, and in order to perfect myself in the languages, will do myself the pleasure of making a long visit at C——, when

you have taken possession of your estate.

All this, Lucy, proceeded from the mouth of 'Squire Homespun, a being, who a few months ago you would have taken for a savage. Portland and Sir Charles both seem to promise themselves a great deal of pleasure in his acquaintance, and I make no doubt but he will prove himself worthy the title of their friend.

Miss Kitty appears perfectly sensible of the superiority her brother has gained over her, and if I am not greatly mistaken, will use all her interest with her mama to render her an equal ornament to society.

society. About ten o'clock we prepared to take our leave, but by the intercession of the young gentleman, and the intreaties of his sister, we were at length prevailed upon to stay supper, and then returned more joyous than it is possible to conceive.

Mr. Portland is now gone with his uncle to take possession of the family estate, and as soon as he returns we all take our flight to the grove,

There Hymen will join

Both their hands and mine.

My Colonel returns from Yorkshire the day after to-morrow ; he  
has



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has already sent me a large cargo of silks and baubles, and intreats me to set the mantua-makers and milliners to work as fast as possible. Dress, dress, dress, is the continual theme. Jessica declares she will add nothing new to her wardrobe: I asked the reason. You have laid in a sufficient stock to furnish us all three, is the sly hussy's reply. If I live I will punish her, by presenting her with half a dozen pieces of silk unmade, and then see if she will not find sufficient employment, without counting the number of mine. Mademoiselle La Marson waits to try my white and silver. Adieu, Lucy, remember we shall expect you to meet us

## GROVE, &c. 1911

us at the grove the beginning of next week : they call again.

Adieu ! adieu !

C. RUMNEY.

LET-

192. HADLEIGH

LETTER XXI.

*Miss Belfield, to Miss Sophia Belfield.*

HADLEIGH GROVE.

AS promises should ever be most faithfully observed, I will endeavour to perform mine to my dearest Sophy ; but indeed, Child, the task, though pleasing, is fort difficile. Since my arrival at the grove, I have not till this morning found a single moment that I could with any propriety dedicate to writing. The news-papers have, I imagine, by this time informed you of the marriage of my three amiable friends ; but as a minute account of the solemnity will

will be more pleasing to my sister, I will endeavour to give her a detail of the particulars of that joyful day. About ten on Tuesday morning, the three ladies, attended by Miss Faulkner, Miss Holgate, and your Lucy, dressed all in virgin white, bent their course towards the chapel, and being there met by their lovers, Mr. Ashton, Monsieur Gavot, and young Holgate, the rector began the awful service: before it was half finished, a carriage stopt at the chapel door, and presently entered a young gentleman and lady, who no sooner perceived that Sir Charles had received the heavenly benediction, than they stepped forward, and the former embracing him, presented to him his lady. When the saluta-

tions of the company were over, Monsieur De Fal and his lovely partner (for I really, Sophy, never saw a finer woman) accompanied us back to the grove, and we were there joined by 'Squire Homespun and his sister. During the time of dinner, we were entertained with a concert of vocal and instrumental music, and after an elegant desert, the company divided into parties, and we spent the afternoon in rambling about the gardens.

Never was day spent more agreeably, nor evening more joyous; as the company were numerous, our diversions were so likewise: in one room you might behold a party seated round a card-table, in another



ther a beautiful groupe of both sexes forming an harmonious concert, and in a third, a still larger party joining in the sprightly dance. Your Lucy was of the latter; but that I need not have informed you, as my Sophy is too well acquainted with her vivacious sister, to imagine she could sit still while a fiddle was going within a mile of her. One thing however I imagine I may venture to acquaint you with, without offering an affront to your sagacity. What is that? asks my Sophy. Why, Child, I had the best partner in the room, and that partner was no other than 'Squire Homespun. You know, my Dear, it was the charms of Miss Rumney that caused the wonderful reformation that has

lately been made in him, so must not wonder that he was a little in the dumps to see the object of his adoration transmogrified into Mrs. Montford; but finding it was in vain to covet his neighbour's goods, the good soul took courage, and ventured to look out for one as much like her as possible: this one I need not tell you was myself, and if we continue the farce much longer, my friends at the grove insist upon it, that I shall be qualified to act in the character of Mrs. Homespun. What think you, Sophy? much stranger things than this have happened; and to speak seriously, I really think whoever arrives at that honour, will have reason to stile herself a happy woman.

woman. Had it not been Elmira who gave me an account of his former uncooth behaviour, I positively should look upon it as the fruits of a disordered brain: never did you see a man whose address was more easy and unaffected; nothing in his whole deportment discovers the least tincture of the illiterate. But I will stop my pen, lest you should accuse me of a weakness that I hope is a stranger to my bosom. The good soul I have been speaking of, sues for the honour of escorting me home; it is granted, and you will then have an opportunity of making your own remarks. Each of my new-married friends have given me an invitation to accompany

them to their respective homes ; but as it is not in my power to oblige them all, I propose returning the day in which they quit the hospitable mansion of Lady Oswald, but have given her ladyship a promise to repeat my visit as soon as I can obtain my mama's permission. Sir Charles Davers conveys his amiable Jessica to an elegant village in Hampshire, whither De Fal and his lady accompany them. Colonel Montford and his fair bride are going to make a tour to Southampton, and at their return will take up their residence at Hampstead ; their first intention was to have settled in Yorkshire, but, by the joint entreaties of Lady Oswald, and Mr.

and



and Mrs. Ashton, they have taken a neat little box at the above-mentioned place, with a view of passing a great share of their time at both houses; and to add to their felicity, Mr. Portland and his lady will reside at a few miles distance. Monsieur Gavot is to continue with them; and, in order to cement the friendship of the three ladies still closer, the two amiable sisters have engaged to spend a month every summer at Hadleigh-Grove, at which place Mrs. Portland and your Lucy is to join them. To tell you in what a joyous way our time now passes would only be to raise my Sophy's envy; I shall therefore reserve the repetition of our various amusements,



200 HADLEIGH, &c.

ments, till I have the pleasure of  
assuring her in person how much  
I am

Her affectionate sister,

LUCY BELFIELD.

F I N I S.



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